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The Main Thing Devotional

Chaplain's Office

10-14-2019

I am Second

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Recommended Citation

Bennett, Anna, "I am Second" (2019). *The Main Thing Devotional*. 34.
<https://knowledge.e.southern.edu/main/34>

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“Pray then like this: “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.”
Matthew 6:9 ESV

I am Second

For years I have struggled with the spiritual practice of confession. While I embraced confession as a biblical mandate, in practice it often felt so mechanical. *God, I messed up, please forgive me. Father, I know you already know how I missed the mark today, so I’m not sure why I need to tell you again, but I wasn’t kind, or I lost my temper with the slow driver in front of me, or I _____ (fill in the blank).* As a concept, confession made sense, but as a practice it felt so elementary to tell the God of the universe what He already knows about me.

It wasn’t until a friend of mine taught me to pray daily for the baptism of the Holy Spirit that I really learned

- 1) Confession isn’t for God, it’s for *me*, and
- 2) Confession isn’t just about what I’ve done, it’s much more about the condition of my heart.

As Jesus teaches His disciples how to pray He tells them to pray to our Father: “Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven,” Matthew 6:10.

Andy Stanley interprets, **“You first God, me a very distant second.”**

This verse is a confession. It’s also a declaration. But I hear it even more as a confession because personally, I like to be first. I like to be right (one of the constant growing edges of my personality types). My sinful nature causes me to even enjoy being selfish, wanting everything to be about me, catered to me. Praying this prayer, “God, Your kingdom, Your will, not mine,” is a confession that exposes the condition of my heart, draws it from the dark shadows and into the light, and asks for the Spirit to radically transform me today.

God, it’s not my kingdom so I don’t have to be, (even stronger) I am not in control; I don’t have to worry about how everything in my life today either works well, or feels disastrous. You are God, and I have renewed confidence in you today because you are Master of Your Kingdom, You have it all under control. I recognize my will has the definite potential to get in the way today, so keep my eyes focused on you, keep my heart in the submitted position, and cause to me ever trust in you. Be Lord of All, but also be Lord of My life.

Whatever prayer of confession you feel led to pray today as you make the Main Thing, the main thing in your life this week, may you be able to proclaim to God “You first, me a very distant second!”

Challenge:

- You did it! You made it to Midterm Break! While it is so easy to fill up the short weekend binge-watching Netflix or just relaxing with friends, this can often lead you to feel more depleted than you may feel even now. Listen to your body, pay attention to the Holy Spirit tugging on your heart. It’s ok to relax but I challenge you as well to make intentional time to fuel up on Jesus over this weekend. And may you be richly fulfilled as a result.

- Also, if this halfway point into the semester has you identifying a relationship that isn't so healthy, an unhealthy rhythm or habit in your life, unresolved conflict, isolation or academic struggles that make you nervous for the remaining half of the semester, don't hesitate to reach out to the Chaplain's Office to let us know how we can help support you!

Blessings to you this week and this break!

-Anna Bennett